

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 JUSE-00

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR BM

SUBJECT: GUB PROMULGATES NARCOTIC DRUGS LAW

1. GUB FEBRUARY 20 PROMULGATED LONG AWAITED NEW NARCOTICS DRUGS LAW, WHICH COVERES ALL ASPECTS OF ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFICKING. STRICT PENALTIES HIGHLIGHT THE LAW, WHICH MAKES CULTIVATION, PRODUCTION, POSSESSION, TRANSPORT, IMPORT, EXPORT, AND "CONTACTS

WITH OTHER COUNTRIES RELATING TO" NARCOTICS, AND ACCEPTANCE OF BRIBES, ALL PUNISHABLE BY HEAVY FINES AND 5-10 YEARS IMPRISONMENT. THE DEATH PENALTY CAN BE IMPOSED FOR PROCESSING OR SALE OF NARCOTICS. COMPULSORY REGISTRATION AND TREATMENT IS PRESCRIBED FOR ADDICTS.

2. AT SAME TIME, GUB LISTED 101 DRUGS DECLARED AS NARCOTIC DRUGS; DECLARED DRUG ADDICTION A NOTIFIABLE DISEASE; ORDERED
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FORMATION OF BOARJS AT TOWNSHIP LEVEL TO REGISTER AND TREAT DRUG

ADICTS, AND DIRECTED ADICTS TO REGISTER BY APRIL 22, 1974.
AT PRESS CONFERENCE ANNOUNCING THESE MEASURES, HOME MINISTER
U KO KO APPEALED TO PARENTS TO REPORT DRUG-ADDICTED CHILDREN, AND
THREATENED LEGAL ACTION AGAINST ANY WHO FAIL TO COMPLY.

3. EXEMPTED FOR FIVE YEARS FROM BAN ON POPPY CULTIVATION WERE
18,734 ACRES IN 16 TOWNSHIPS OF SHAN STATE, WHERE ALTERNATIVE CROPS
NOT YET AVAILABLE. IT WAS STATED THAT THE CULTIVATION AREA SET
ASIDE WOULD PRODUCE ABOUT 50 TONS OF RAW OPIUM OF WHICH ABOUT 15
TONS ANNUALLY NEEDED FOR PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURE. NOTHING
WAS SAID ON THE USE OF THE EXCESS CROP, BUT IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT
CULTIVATION IN EXEMPTED AREAS WILL BE ENDED IN 3-5 YEARS. IN
PRACTICE, MUCH OF THE EXEMPTED AREA LIES OUTSIDE GUB CONTROL.

4. PRINTED TEXT OF NEW STATUTE WAS DATED "OCTOBER 12, 1973",
INDICATING THAT GUB MOVED VERY DELIBERATELY IN REACHING FINAL
ACCEPTANCE AND PROMULGATION. NO FOREIGN MEMBERS OF LOCAL PRESS
CORPS WERE INVITED TO THE PRESS CONFERENCE AT WHICH IT WAS
STATED THAT GUB ACCOMPLISHED ALL DRAFTING OF NEW LAW ON ITS
OWN WITHOUT ANY OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE. PRESS WAS ALSO TOLD NO
CURRENT OFFICIAL ESTIMATE AVAILABLE OF NUMBER OF ADDICTS.

5. COMMENT: INITIAL ANALYSIS OF LAW LEAVES IMPRESSION THAT
IT IS EXTREMELY THOROUGH AND FAR REACHING. IT DEMONSTRATES ONCE
AGAIN THAT GUB MEANS BUSINESS, ALTHOUGH ENGLISH LANGUAGE
"GUARDIAN" EDITORIAL COMMENT THAT THE LAW "SPELLS THE END OF
NARCOTICS IN BURMA" IS OBVIOUSLY HIGHLY OPTIMISTIC. NEVERTHELESS,
THE PUBLIC IS NOW ON NOTICE AS NEVER BEFORE TO STAY OUT OF ANY
ASPECT OF THE NARCOTICS BUSINESS.

6. TEXT OF LAW WILL FOLLOW BY AIRGRAM.
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